

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE 10-A

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER
16 May 1985

Islamic kidnappers release photos of victims, issue demands 'last time'

United Press International

BEIRUT — A Muslim terrorist group sent a Beirut newspaper photographs of four kidnapped Americans and two French kidnap victims yesterday, and issued conditions for their release "for the last time."

The pictures and statements — dated May 1985 and signed by a group known as Islamic Jihad, or Islamic Holy War — were delivered to the newspaper An Nahar just hours after the kidnapping of Aidan Walsh of Ireland, a senior U.N. official, by gunmen in West Beirut. No mention was made of Walsh in the statement.

Six color photographs of four Americans and two Frenchmen kidnapped in mainly Muslim West Beirut were accompanied by notes addressed to their relatives and to the Rev. Jesse Jackson, the American political and civil rights figure.

The newspaper that received the photos, An Nahar in West Beirut, is one of the most respected Arab-language dailies in the Mideast.

The independent newspaper identified the Americans staring grimly into the camera as the Rev. Benjamin Weir, the Rev. Lawrence Jenco, U.S. Embassy official William Buckley and Terry A. Anderson, Associated Press bureau chief in Beirut. The four were kidnapped separately between May 1984 and March 1985.

The kidnapping of Walsh yesterday brought to nine the number of Western kidnap victims now missing in Lebanon.

Walsh, 48, was deputy director of the U.N. Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian refugees. He was seized yesterday by two of 10 gunmen who blocked his car as he was being driven to work, police sources said.

There was no explanation for Walsh's kidnapping, and no one immediately claimed responsibility for the abduction.

The typewritten statement addressed to the relatives of the six kidnap victims said:

"Their release is up to your action to persuade your governments to pressure them to ask their agents in Kuwait to release all our brothers who are jailed there."

"For the last time, we warn you that any contact between you and your kidnapped relatives will be cut and that the punishment will be a horrible disaster in case you do not act seriously in this respect and pressure your governments to intervene and set them (our brothers) free," the statement said.

The statement did not specify what would happen if the governments involved did not intervene in the case.

"Our brothers" apparently was a reference to three Lebanese Shiite Muslims and seven Iraqis jailed in

Kuwait for a series of bombings against French and U.S. targets that killed six people on Dec. 12, 1983. The attackers were said to be members of Al Dawa, a pro-Iran Shiite group.

The other two men in the photographs delivered to An Nahar were Frenchmen Marcel Fontaine and Marcel Carton, both diplomats at the French Embassy in West Beirut. They were kidnapped in March.

Each picture showed the victims standing alone against a wall, An Nahar said. There was no way of determining when the pictures were taken.

The statement also contained appeals to Jackson, an unsuccessful presidential candidate in the 1984 elections who obtained the release of a U.S. Navy pilot shot down by Syrian forces over Lebanon in December 1983.

"The release of our brothers in Kuwait means to us the release of all your relatives in our custody," the statement said. "We will not be patient for a long time but instead will act in a way that will terrify America and France forever."

Islamic Jihad is a shadowy Muslim fundamentalist group that has claimed responsibility for suicide car- and truck-bomb attacks in Beirut against the U.S. Embassy and the U.S. Marine headquarters in 1983.

The group also claimed responsibility for bombing the U.S. Embassy annex in East Beirut in September. The group is believed by some Western intelligence officials to have links to Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's fundamentalist Islamic regime in Iran.